



**Department of
Higher Education**

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Ohio Transfer 36 Guidance Document: English Composition



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Introduction

This document provides an overview of how to prepare course materials for submission to [Ohio Transfer 36](#), which guarantees student transfer of general education coursework among public institutions in the state. As institutions prepare to make submissions in the Course Equivalency Management System ([CEMS](#)), individuals involved in the process (faculty, administrators, and staff) should use this guidance document to become familiar with the steps required for a course to be approved for inclusion in Ohio Transfer 36. This effort entails [collaboration](#) of people in many roles on Ohio's campuses and at the Ohio Department of Higher Education. The ultimate goal is a high-quality, meaningful educational experience for Ohio's students.

If you have questions after reading this guidance document, contact: Michelle Blaney, Associate Director, Articulation & Transfer Policy at mblaney@highered.ohio.gov or Jessi Spencer, Senior Director, Articulation and Transfer Policy, Budget, and Constituent Relations at jspencer@highered.ohio.gov.

Components of a Submission for Ohio Transfer 36

1. Course Details Form

- This document will help your institution complete the Course Details page in CEMS.
- Be sure that the information on the Course Details Form matches the syllabus and other documentation in the submission.
- Ohio Transfer 36 coordinators should work with faculty subject matter experts to complete Course Details Forms.

2. Learning Outcome Template

- This document will allow faculty who are familiar with the course to provide brief statements that indicate how it fulfills each of the [Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcomes](#).
- Because Ohio Transfer 36 focuses on learning outcomes, please describe what the course requires students to do, not simply the topics the course covers.
- For each learning outcome, CEMS responses should address:
 - A. **the specific course outcomes and related content through which students achieve this Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcome.** What course materials and activities relate to this outcome?
 - B. **assessment of student achievement of this Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcome.** How do instructors determine the degree to which students have met this outcome?
 - C. **key locations in the attached course documents that demonstrate student focus on this Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcome.** Where in the submitted course documents (syllabus, assignments, etc.) can faculty reviewers find content, activities, and/or assessments related to this outcome? Identify several key examples to demonstrate the importance of the outcome in the course. Please avoid referring to the same assignments repeatedly to explain how the course meets each of the outcomes. Include a variety of activities in your explanations to show that the course as a whole emphasizes the Ohio Transfer 36 outcomes.
- Please label the parts of each learning outcome response as A, B, and C.
- Responses need not be lengthy. Think of the CEMS responses as guides to the attached course documents, highlighting the most important elements on which reviewers should focus for each Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcome.
- Please avoid copying and pasting material that's available elsewhere in the submission (for example, in the syllabus). The CEMS learning outcome responses are intended to allow faculty to provide clear, concise explanations to other faculty (the members of Ohio Transfer 36 review panels) about how the course supports Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcomes.
- Text entered into CEMS won't incorporate advanced formatting (for example, bullet points, indenting) from word processors, so please use simple text and spacing.

3. Supporting Documents

- Upload **an up-to-date working syllabus** that includes:
 - course learning outcomes. Course learning outcomes should support—but need not be identical to—the Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcomes.
 - information about the course textbook and/or other readings (if applicable). For open educational resources, links are helpful.
 - a detailed calendar of readings and activities. Please provide clear identifying information for the reading assignments on the schedule (authors, book/article/chapter titles, etc.). Dates should be recent but need not be current.
 - a list of graded assignments with points/weights/percentages for each assignment.
- Upload **sample activities/assessments** that demonstrate student achievement of the Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcomes.
- Please limit the number of attachments and use file names that will allow panel members to easily identify each document.
- A master syllabus is acceptable in place of a working syllabus as long as the information listed above is included. Some master syllabi don't include a detailed calendar/schedule for the term.
- A master syllabus (in addition to a working syllabus) is often helpful in outlining the required elements of a course regardless of instructor or delivery method. A working syllabus may provide a representative example of how the course is taught, but the institution should be committed to meeting the Ohio Transfer 36 learning outcomes in all sections of a course.
- If a course has not yet been offered, the submitter should still provide the information listed above so that the panel can evaluate each learning outcome.

Tips

- **Submit early!**
 - Allow yourself an extra review cycle or two before a deadline in case it becomes necessary to do a resubmission.
 - Just because a submission was returned, that doesn't mean that it was rejected by the review panel. OATN staff will sometimes make suggestions for improving a submission before it is forwarded to the review panel, especially if it seems likely that the panel will request missing information.
 - Please don't wait until the submission deadline of a review cycle to send in submissions. You should leave time for OATN staff to resolve any possible issues with the submission while still allowing them to forward it to the review panel on time.
- If you would like OATN staff to review materials before submitting in CEMS, please reach out in advance of the review cycle deadline.
- If your institution would like to connect with an Ohio Transfer 36 faculty review panel lead, please reach out to OATN staff to schedule a meeting.
- If a panel's review comment is not clear, please send OATN staff an email. We may be able to provide additional information.
- If faculty members from your institution serve on review panels, take advantage of their expertise and guidance even if they are not preparing the submission. A list of faculty panel members from your institution can be obtained by sending OATN staff an email.
- Check out the OATN newsletter! There is a section devoted to Ohio Transfer 36, TAG, and CTAG submissions. Updates and deadlines are often mentioned in the articles, along with a link to the complete submission and review timeline, to help you prioritize your institution's submissions.
- If you asked CEMS to reset your password and have not received an email from "ATC-Help" within five minutes, please contact OATN staff immediately. CEMS will not tell you if you are using the wrong user ID.
- We are all in this together! If for whatever reason you are stuck, please feel free to contact OATN staff.



English Composition Submission Specifics

The “Core Courses” portion of Ohio Transfer 36 requires at least 3 semester hours of course credit in English composition (First Writing Course, TME 001). If a student completes a Second Writing Course (TME 002), this course will apply towards the “Exploration Foundation” portion of Ohio Transfer 36. Please note, not all Ohio public institutions of higher education require Second Writing in addition to First Writing, so the course may only apply as an elective upon transfer.

Use of the Ohio Transfer 36 Guidelines for English composition was discontinued starting Fall 2012. All English Composition Ohio Transfer 36 courses approved under the guidelines were expired by Summer 2012 and replaced by First or Second Writing learning outcomes only when the course received an approval for either First or Second Writing.

- In order to be considered for First Writing and Second Writing Ohio Transfer 36 courses, each institutional course must meet all of the established learning outcomes. In addition, each set of learning outcomes has recommended credit hours, so that institutions will be able to design, match, and submit courses with a comparable and appropriate amount of credit to fulfill the learning outcomes.
- First Writing and Second Writing Ohio Transfer 36 courses must focus on the teaching, practice, and evaluation of expository writing and argumentative writing, although the course(s) may include other components. This focus must be reflected in statements of course learning outcomes and evaluation.
- Transfer students who have completed the Ohio Transfer 36 will not be subjected to a diagnostic placement test at the receiving institution unless one is also required of native students who have completed equivalent coursework.

Some Tips for Submitting a Successful Proposal

There are four multi-part outcomes for both the First Writing Course and the Second Writing Course. The outcomes for the two courses are parallel: The first outcome for both courses is titled Rhetorical Knowledge; the second is Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing; the third is Knowledge of Composing Processes; and the fourth is Knowledge of Conventions. The Second Writing Course should reinforce the outcomes students worked to achieve in the First Writing Course, but the specific expectations are considerably more rigorous. Below, you will find some advice about developing your proposal, as well as additional information about the differences between the outcomes for the two writing courses.

Minimal Course Requirements

In addition to the four learning outcomes for writing courses, there is a preliminary section called “Minimal Course Requirements.” Although there is no separate text box in CEMS titled “Minimal Course Requirements,” proposers should make sure that their proposals clearly indicate how their courses meet the “Minimal Course Requirements.”

The members of the English Composition and Oral Communication panel developed the minimal requirements in response to questions about how much writing students must complete in an Ohio Transfer 36-approved writing course.

We realize that the information in this section is less specific than what some proposers would like—and more specific than what others would like. Some proposers would like us to specify a particular number of formal essays, rather than noting that students must “compose a variety of texts,” while others wish that we would not include minimal requirements.

Our goal in drafting the “Minimal Course Requirements” was to indicate the degree of rigor expected in an Ohio Transfer 36-approved writing course *without prescribing a specific number of writing projects*. We believe that the members of an institution’s writing program should determine precisely how students will meet the “Minimal Course Requirements.” Students at one school might be required to compose and revise eight 625-word essays over the course of the semester to meet the recommended “minimum of 5000 total words of text that has been revised and copyedited for applicable rhetorical situations,” and because those students are completing one essay every-other week, most of their low-stakes writing might be early drafts of their final essays. However, at another school, students might compose and revise only three 1750-word writing projects to meet the recommended 5000-word minimum, and while working on those longer writing projects, those students will no doubt also be composing a variety of low-stakes writing, such as single-draft reading responses and in-class writing.

The “Minimal Course Requirements” section is the only section that is identical for both the First Writing Course and the Second Writing Course. However, that does not mean that your courses need to mirror each other. For example, a school might require all students in the First Writing Course to compose and revise five writing projects and complete a wide range of low-stakes writing, while requiring students in the Second Writing Course to compose and revise four writing projects and complete a narrower range of low-stakes writing.

Learning Outcome 1: Rhetorical Knowledge

The first outcome for both courses is the most general. It overviews writing **and** reading experiences students should have in a writing course.

The First Writing Course introduces students to a variety of genres and a range of rhetorical situations, and at most schools, students learn about these genres, in part, by reading nonfiction articles that were originally published in a variety of popular forums (such as magazines and newspapers published either in hard copy or online). However, institutions—particularly those

that require students to take only one writing course--may require students to read scholarly articles as well.

These reading assignments are typically paired with other class activities designed to help students learn about various rhetorical strategies used by published authors. Thus, the readings should help students begin using these strategies, as appropriate, in their own writing.

The Second Writing Course focuses on scholarly discourse. The learning outcomes for the Second Writing Course specify that students must “read academic texts and understand how disciplinary conventions shape the texts they read,” so reviewers look for evidence that students are assigned reading from sources such as peer-reviewed journals. However, the corresponding expectations for writing are less specific: Students “compose texts that respond to the needs of appropriate audiences, using suitable discourse conventions to shape those texts” and “use academic conventions of format and structure when appropriate.” The Second Writing Course is offered at various levels at different schools (e.g., it may be a second-semester course at one school and a junior-level course at another), and the writing assignments will reflect the level of the course. At a school where students take the course early, one major writing project may require students to analyze a journal from the discipline they plan to major in and tell other new majors about that journal. At a school where students take the course much later, writing projects may require students to practice primary research and employ the disciplinary conventions of their major when writing about their research.

Page 4 of this guidance document includes Learning Outcome Template instructions. These instructions explain that proposers should include three items in each of the CEMS outcomes text boxes: Proposals should indicate (A) what course materials relate to the outcome, (B) how student achievement is assessed, and (C) where in the attached course document(s) reviewers can find more information. For writing courses, reviewers will be best equipped to review a course if the Rhetorical Knowledge section of the CEMS proposal:

- A. **Indicates how many writing and reading assignments are required and what the range of assignments is.** Remember that the Rhetorical Knowledge outcome is the most general of the four outcomes, and you will have the opportunity to share more specific details about your course in response to other outcomes. At this point, a general overview is appropriate, e.g.: “Students will compose four essays, each representing a different genre, and prepare an end-of semester portfolio. They will read one textbook chapter about rhetoric every-other week, read one published writing sample every week, and further explore these readings through short written responses and in-class activities.”
- B. **Indicates how these various writing and reading assignments are valued.** In response to later outcomes, you will provide specific information about how student work is evaluated. At this point, it is more important that reviewers get the “big picture,” that they

see how various assignments are weighted. For example, “Each essay is worth 10% of the semester grade, the portfolio is worth 30%, out-of-class low-stakes writing is worth 15%, and in-class work is worth 15%.”

- C. **Specifies where reviewers can find additional information.** If you attach one large PDF that includes a master syllabus, sample syllabus, sample assignments, and grading standards, consider telling the reviewers on which pages they will find materials related to your answers to parts B and C. If you attach several documents, give reviewers the names of the documents where they will find additional information about those responses.

Learning Outcome 2: Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

In response to Learning Outcome 2, provide reviewers with information about the common reading (the readings assigned to the whole class), about students’ secondary research, and about how this reading will be reflected in student writing.

For the First Writing Course, this outcome emphasizes that students need to read a range of texts (“analyze relationships among writer, text, and audience in linguistically diverse texts”) and use a variety of secondary sources to support their writing. For the Second writing course, this outcome focuses less on the common course readings, and more on students’ critical analysis of the sources they use to support their writing.

Reviewers will be best equipped to review a course if the Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing section of the CEMS proposal:

- A. **Describes how common readings are used and indicates the course research requirements.** Reviewers need to see (1) how critical reading skills are taught and made relevant to student writing and (2) what kinds of researched writing are expected in the class. A thorough description of these two course components is probably too detailed for the CEMS text box, so you might use part A of this response to provide some context for sample assignments to which you will refer readers in part C.
- B. **Provides specific assessment information.** As with part A, you might use part B to provide some context for grading standards to which you will refer readers in part C.
- C. **Specifies where reviewers can find additional information in the attachment(s).** You do not need to provide readers with the specific assignments for every response to a common reading or for every researched writing project. Please do provide representative samples that will help reviewers better appreciate your course.

Learning Outcome 3: Knowledge of Composing Processes

In response to Learning Outcome 3, explain how students are encouraged to thoughtfully revise and edit their writing. For the First Writing Course, this outcome emphasizes teaching students the difference between revising and editing, teaching them to give and use peer response appropriately, and encouraging them to revise their work. For the Second Writing Course, this outcome emphasizes the reflection and improvement.

Reviewers will be best equipped to review a course if the Knowledge of Composing Processes section of the CEMS proposal:

- A. Indicates how instructors teach revision and feedback.** An overview of the process required for a typical writing project may be sufficient, though some proposers also include references to other class activities that encourage revision.
- B. Explains the impact of revision on student grades.** If, for example, your institution uses a portfolio system and/or a grading contract system, you can explain how this method has a direct impact on student grades.
- C. Specifies where reviewers can find additional information in the attachment(s).** For example, the assignment sheet for a representative writing project may be useful to reviewers if it includes due dates for rough drafts, peer response, and so forth.

Learning Outcome 4: Knowledge of Conventions

In response to the Knowledge of Conventions outcome, explain how students are introduced to appropriate genre conventions (First Writing Course) or disciplinary conventions (Second Writing Course), how they are encouraged to adopt the surface conventions appropriate to the rhetorical situation, and how they are taught to document their work.

Reviewers will be best equipped to review a course if the Knowledge of Conventions section of the CEMS proposal:

- A. Indicates how genre/disciplinary conventions, surface conventions, and documentation are taught.** If you have explained how genre/disciplinary conventions are taught in your response to other outcomes, you can concentrate on surface conventions and documentation here.
- B. Provides assessment information.** Students' ability to adopt appropriate conventions no doubt has an impact on the grades they receive on their writing projects, and you may have already provided information about grading standards for projects. However, if there are other graded activities that related to Knowledge of Conventions (e.g., an MLA documentation quiz), you might mention them here.
- C. Specifies where reviewers can find additional information in the attachment(s).**



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English Composition Exemplars

Institutional English Composition exemplar requests will be connected to the panel lead to review institutional questions prior to submission.